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Towards global partnerships

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2011, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-sixth session the item entitled "Towards global partnerships" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 32nd, 34th and 37th meetings, on 3 and 10 November and 1 December 2011. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/66/SR.32, 34 and 37). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 6th meetings, from 3 to 5 October (see A/C.2/66/SR.2-6).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "United Nations corporate partnerships: the role and functioning of the Global Compact" (A/66/137 and Corr.1) and the comments of the Secretary-General thereon (A/66/137/Add.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector (A/66/320);

(c) Letter dated 27 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/66/388).

4. At its 32nd meeting, on 3 November, introductory statements were made by the Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact Office and the Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/C.2/66/SR.32).

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5. At the same meeting, the Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact Office and the Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit responded to the comments made and questions posed by the representatives of Senegal, Bangladesh, the Comoros and Belarus (see A/C.2/66/SR.32).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/66/L.43 and Rev.1

6. At the 34th meeting, on 10 November, the representative of Poland, on behalf of Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Towards global partnerships" (A/C.2/66/L.43). Subsequently, Monaco joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 55/215 of 21 December 2000, 56/76 of 11 December 2001, 58/129 of 19 December 2003, 60/215 of 22 December 2005, 62/211 of 19 December 2007 and 64/223 of 21 December 2009,

"*Reiterating* that sustainable development is the overarching framework for United Nations activities in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, in particular in the pursuit of development and the eradication of poverty and for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and those contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Reaffirming* its resolve to work with all stakeholders and strengthen partnerships in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and recalling in this regard the objectives formulated in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, notably the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the reaffirmation they received in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in 2010,

"*Underlining* the fact that cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, including the private sector, shall serve the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be undertaken in a manner that maintains the integrity, impartiality and independence, as well as the central role, of the United Nations system,

"*Taking note* of the further increase in the number of public-private partnerships worldwide,

"*Welcoming* the contribution of all relevant partners, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, to the implementation of the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits and their reviews in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, as

well as the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"*Emphasizing* that the United Nations, together with the private sector and all other relevant partners, can contribute in multiple ways to addressing the obstacles confronted by developing countries in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustainable development and to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals of the United Nations through, inter alia, financial resources, access to technology, management, capacity-building and other expertise, networks, business models and support for programmes and contributions to policy dialogue, including through the reduced pricing of drugs, where appropriate, for the prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and other diseases, and through innovative mechanisms and partnerships in the health sector,

"*Welcoming* the efforts and encouraging further efforts by all relevant partners, including the private sector, to engage as reliable and consistent partners in the development process and to take into account not only the economic and financial, but also the developmental, social, human rights, gender and environmental implications of their undertakings and, in general, towards implementing corporate social and environmental responsibility, that is, bringing such values and responsibilities to bear on their conduct and policy premised on profit incentives, in conformity with national laws and regulations,

"*Underlining* the fact that, in the face of multiple, interrelated and systemic global issues, such as economic growth, environmental challenges, global health issues, food security, migration flows and access to energy, cooperation and increased commitment by all relevant partners, including the public sector, the private sector and civil society, are needed more than ever, and recognizing, in this context, the potential that partnerships have in contributing to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"*Recognizing* the contribution of the private sector to the provision of resources and expertise on the policy environment, technical programmes, advocacy and communication, knowledge management and resource mobilization in many areas,

"*Noting* that the financial and economic crisis, inter alia, has demonstrated the need for values and principles in business, including for sustainable business practices, and the creation of decent work, which in turn has led to broader private sector engagement in support of United Nations goals,

"*Reaffirming* the principles of sustainable development, and underlining the need for a global consensus on the key values and principles that will promote sustainable, fair, equitable, broad-based and sustained economic development, and that corporate social and environmental responsibility are important elements of such a consensus,

"*Recognizing* the importance of promoting a gender perspective in global partnerships, and welcoming, in this context, the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

(UN-Women) and the joint Global Compact/UN-Women initiative on women's empowerment principles,

"*Taking note with appreciation* of the progress achieved in the work of the United Nations on partnerships, notably in the framework of various United Nations organizations, agencies, funds, programmes, task forces, commissions and initiatives, such as the Global Compact, the World Summit on the Information Society, partnerships established under the 'Every woman every child' and 'Energy for all' initiatives launched by the Secretary-General, and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, and welcoming the establishment of a multitude of partnerships at the field level, entered into by various United Nations agencies, non-public partners and Member States,

"*Noting with appreciation* the advancement of the concept of corporate social responsibility through the Global Compact,

"*Recognizing* the vital role the Global Compact Office continues to play with regard to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to partner strategically with the private sector in accordance with its General Assembly mandate and with regard to encouraging and facilitating dialogue and partnership among key stakeholders in support of the United Nations work in the economic, social, environmental and related fields and the ten principles of the Global Compact and broader United Nations goals, such as the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector;

"2. *Stresses* that partnerships are voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits;

"3. *Also stresses* the importance of the contribution of voluntary partnerships to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, while reiterating that they are a complement to, but not intended to substitute for, the commitment made by Governments with a view to achieving those goals;

"4. *Further stresses* that partnerships should be consistent with national laws and national development strategies and plans, as well as the priorities of countries where their implementation takes place, bearing in mind the relevant guidance provided by Governments;

"5. *Emphasizes* the vital role played by Governments in promoting responsible business practices at the national, regional and international levels, including providing the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks, where appropriate, and encourages them to continue to provide support to United Nations efforts to engage with the private sector, including through Global Compact Local Networks;

"6. *Recalls* that the 2005 World Summit welcomed the positive contributions of the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, foundations and academia, in the promotion and implementation of development and human rights programmes, and also recalls that the 2005 World Summit resolved to enhance the contribution of non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in national development efforts, as well as in the promotion of the global partnership for development, and encouraged public-private partnerships in a wide range of areas, with the aim of eradicating poverty and promoting full employment and social integration;

"7. *Recognizes* the vital role that the private sector plays in development, including through engaging in various partnership models and by generating decent employment and investment, giving access to and developing new technologies, as well as stimulating inclusive equitable broad-based and sustained economic growth, while bearing in mind the need to ensure that their activities conform fully with the principle of national ownership of development strategies;

"8. *Also recognizes* the need for effective accountability and transparency in the implementation of such public-private partnerships;

"9. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to promote innovative multi-stakeholder approaches in addressing the challenges of development in the context of globalization, which includes involving the appropriate set of stakeholders from all relevant sectors and utilizing the core competencies of each partner to catalyse wide-ranging changes that achieve greater scale and impact;

"10. *Encourages* the United Nations system to continue to employ the partnership selection and engagement process, a common and systemic approach, which places greater emphasis on impact, transparency, coherence, accountability and sustainability, without imposing undue rigidity in partnership agreements, and with due consideration being given to the following partnership principles: common purpose, transparency, bestowing no unfair advantages upon any partner of the United Nations, mutual benefit and mutual respect, accountability, respect for the modalities of the United Nations, striving for balanced representation of relevant partners from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, sectoral and geographic balance, and not compromising the independence and neutrality of the United Nations;

"11. *Encourages* the United Nations to continue to find innovative ways to achieve lasting impact by identifying and replicating successful partnership models and pursuing new forms of collaboration, such as innovative development financing mechanisms, by promoting inclusive local business solutions, sustainable market development and entrepreneurship, and by harnessing and improving the skills of women;

"12. *Requests* Global Compact Local Networks to promote the women's empowerment principles and to create awareness of the many ways in which business can promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community;

"13. *Underlines*, in this context, the importance of integrity measures and public disclosure as advocated in the Global Compact;

"14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to promote effective implementation of the revised United Nations guidelines for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector, including through the effective implementation of the revised Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, thus promoting a culture of transparency and performance, and invites the Secretary-General to create an internal advisory group in the Secretariat, without recourse to additional resources, which will use innovative and cost-effective working methods to ensure coherent brand management across the United Nations and to make recommendations on partnership best practices and lessons learned;

"15. *Invites* the United Nations, when considering partnerships, to seek to engage in a more coherent manner with private sector entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises, that support the core values of the United Nations as reflected in the Charter and other relevant conventions and treaties and that commit to the principles of the Global Compact by translating them into operational corporate policies, codes of conduct and management, monitoring and reporting systems;

"16. *Encourages* the international community to strengthen global partnerships for the integration and implementation of the International Labour Organization Global Jobs Pact in accordance with national plans and priorities;

"17. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to more actively involve the private sector in the work of the Organization, as he did, for example, by convening an annual Private Sector Forum since 2008 and by introducing a private sector track at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in 2011, which allowed for direct deliberations with the private sector and could serve as a model for future events;

"18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to publish within a year of the adoption of the present resolution a bulletin outlining the functions of the Global Compact Office in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it, taking into account the important role of the Global Compact in promoting dialogue and partnership between the United Nations and the private sector with a view to furthering the goals of the Organization, as well as the need to coordinate and harmonize United Nations private sector partnerships;

"19. *Calls for* the strengthening of the role and capacities of the United Nations resident coordinators in line with the 'Delivering as one' initiative and the Global Compact Local Networks, as well as the cooperation between the United Nations system at the country level and the Global Compact Local Networks, to support, in a manner complementary to existing networks, the coordination and application of global partnerships locally;

"20. *Welcomes* the holding of annual meetings of United Nations system private sector focal points, which bring together United Nations entities to share best practices and lessons learned in order to improve partnerships and create conditions for effective scaling up;

"21. *Notes* the progress made in further facilitating the collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector and enhancing transparency by launching the United Nations business website which links private sector resources with the needs of the United Nations system;

"22. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a concise report on specific progress on integrity measures, on the implementation of the revised United Nations guidelines for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector and on the strengthening of the Global Compact Local Networks."

7. At its 37th meeting, on 1 December, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Towards global partnerships" (A/C.2/66/L.43/Rev.1), submitted by Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, joined by Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Madagascar, New Zealand, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and the United States of America. Subsequently, Benin, Costa Rica, Eritrea, Guatemala, Liberia, San Marino and Seychelles also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the revised draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

9. Also at its 37th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.43/Rev.1 (see para. 10).

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Towards global partnerships

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/215 of 21 December 2000, 56/76 of 11 December 2001, 58/129 of 19 December 2003, 60/215 of 22 December 2005, 62/211 of 19 December 2007 and 64/223 of 21 December 2009,

Reiterating that sustainable development is a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and those contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[1]

Recalling the objectives formulated in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] notably the Millennium Development Goals, and the reaffirmation they received in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[3] and the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in 2010,[4] particularly in regard to developing partnerships through the provision of greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general so as to enable them to contribute to the realization of the goals and programmes of the Organization, in particular in the pursuit of development and the eradication of poverty,

Underlining the fact that cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, including the private sector, shall serve the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be undertaken in a manner that maintains and promotes the integrity, impartiality and independence of the Organization,

Taking note of the further increase in the number of public-private partnerships worldwide,

Welcoming the contribution of all relevant partners, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, to the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits and their reviews in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, as well as the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Emphasizing that the United Nations, together with the private sector and all other relevant partners, can contribute in multiple ways to addressing the obstacles

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[1] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[2] See resolution 55/2.

[3] See resolution 60/1.

[4] See resolution 65/1.

confronted by developing countries in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustainable development and to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals,

Welcoming the efforts and encouraging further efforts by all relevant partners, including the private sector, to engage as reliable and consistent partners in the development process and to take into account not only the economic and financial but also the developmental, social, human rights, gender and environmental implications of their undertakings and, in general, towards implementing corporate social and environmental responsibility, that is, bringing such values and responsibilities to bear on their conduct and policy premised on profit incentives, in conformity with national laws and regulations,

Recalling that the 2005 World Summit welcomed the positive contributions of the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, foundations and academia, in the promotion and implementation of development and human rights programmes, and also recalling that the 2005 World Summit resolved to enhance the contribution of non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in national development efforts, as well as in the promotion of the global partnership for development, and encouraged public-private partnerships in a wide range of areas, with the aim of eradicating poverty and promoting full employment and social integration,

Noting that private sector partnerships can play an important role in support of the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations system, taking into account the primary role of the affected State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of such assistance within its territory,

Recognizing the contribution of the private sector to the provision of resources and expertise on the policy environment, technical programmes, advocacy and communication, knowledge management and resource mobilization in many areas, in accordance with national legislation and development plans and priorities,

Noting that the financial and economic crisis, inter alia, has demonstrated the need for values and principles in business, including for sustainable business practices, and the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all, which in turn has led to broader private sector engagement in support of United Nations goals,

Reaffirming the principles of sustainable development, and underlining the need for a global consensus on the key values and principles that will promote sustainable, fair, equitable and sustained economic development, and that corporate social and environmental responsibility are important elements of such a consensus,

Recognizing the importance of promoting a gender perspective in global partnerships, welcoming in this context the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and taking note with appreciation of the joint United Nations Global Compact/UN-Women initiative on women's empowerment principles,

Taking note with appreciation of the progress achieved in the work of the United Nations on partnerships, notably in the framework of various United Nations organizations, agencies, funds, programmes, task forces, commissions and initiatives, and taking note of the establishment of partnerships at the field level,

entered into by various United Nations agencies, non-public partners and Member States,

Noting with appreciation the advancement of the concept of corporate social responsibility through the United Nations Global Compact,

Recognizing the vital role that the United Nations Global Compact Office continues to play with regard to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to partner strategically with the private sector in accordance with its General Assembly mandate to advance United Nations values and responsible business practices within the United Nations system and among the global business community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,[5] the report of the Joint Inspection Unit[6] and the comments of the Secretary-General thereon;[7]

2. Stresses that partnerships are voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits;

3. *Also stresses* the importance of the contribution of voluntary partnerships to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, while reiterating that they are a complement to, but not intended to substitute for, the commitment made by Governments with a view to achieving those goals;

4. *Further stresses* that partnerships should be consistent with national laws and national development strategies and plans, as well as the priorities of countries where they are implemented, bearing in mind the relevant guidance provided by Governments;

5. *Emphasizes* the vital role played by Governments in promoting responsible business practices, including providing the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks, where appropriate, and invites them to continue to provide support to United Nations efforts to engage with the private sector, as appropriate and bearing in mind the activities undertaken by the United Nations Global Compact Local Networks;

6. *Recognizes* the vital role that the private sector plays in development, including through engaging in various partnership models and by generating decent employment and investment, giving access to and developing new technologies, as well as stimulating sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, while bearing in mind the need to ensure that their activities conform fully with the principle of national ownership of development strategies;

7. *Also recognizes* the need for effective accountability and transparency in the implementation of such public-private partnerships by the United Nations;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to promote multi-stakeholder approaches in addressing the challenges of development in the context of globalization;

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[5] A/66/320.

[6] See A/66/137 and Corr.1.

[7] A/66/137/Add.1.

9. *Encourages* the United Nations system to continue to develop, for those partnerships in which it participates, a common and systemic approach, which places greater emphasis on impact, transparency, coherence, accountability and sustainability, without imposing undue rigidity in partnership agreements, and with due consideration being given to the following partnership principles: common purpose, transparency, bestowing no unfair advantages upon any partner of the United Nations, mutual benefit and mutual respect, accountability, respect for the modalities of the United Nations, striving for balanced representation of relevant partners from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, sectoral and geographic balance, and not compromising the independence and neutrality of the United Nations;

10. *Also encourages* the United Nations system to continue to find innovative and additional ways to achieve lasting impact by identifying and replicating successful partnership models and pursuing new forms of collaboration;

11. *Requests* the United Nations Global Compact Local Networks to promote the Women's Empowerment Principles and to create awareness of the many ways in which business can promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community;

12. *Underlines*, in this context, the importance of integrity measures as taken and advocated by the United Nations Global Compact;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to promote effective implementation of the revised United Nations guidelines for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector, including through the effective implementation of the revised Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, thus promoting a culture of transparency and performance, and invites the Secretary-General to create an internal advisory group in the Secretariat, which will use innovative and cost-effective working methods to ensure coherent brand management across the United Nations and to make recommendations on partnership best practices and lessons learned;

14. *Invites* the United Nations system, when considering partnerships, to seek to engage in a more coherent manner with private sector entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises, that support the core values of the United Nations as reflected in the Charter and other relevant conventions and treaties and that commit to the principles of the United Nations Global Compact by translating them into operational corporate policies, codes of conduct and management, monitoring and reporting systems;

15. *Encourages* the international community to strengthen global partnerships for the integration and implementation of the International Labour Organization Global Jobs Pact in partnerships, in accordance with national plans and priorities;

16. *Takes note with appreciation* of the convening of an annual Private Sector Forum since 2008;

17. *Also takes note with appreciation* of the introduction of the private sector track at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in 2011;

18. *Recognizes* the work of the United Nations Global Compact Local Networks, as well as the importance of cooperation between the United Nations system at the local level and the United Nations Global Compact Local Networks, to support, as appropriate and in a manner complementary to existing networks, the coordination and application of global partnerships locally;

19. *Acknowledges* the holding of annual meetings of United Nations system private sector focal points, which bring together United Nations entities to share best practices and lessons learned in order to improve partnerships and create conditions for effective scaling up;

20. *Notes* the progress made in further facilitating the collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector and enhancing transparency by launching the United Nations business website,[8] which links private sector resources with the needs of the United Nations system;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on specific progress on integrity measures, on the implementation of the revised United Nations guidelines for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector and on the strengthening of the United Nations Global Compact Local Networks.

[8] See business.un.org.